UNITY OF UMMAH

By:
Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib
رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ

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Contents



Transliteration

The following method of transliteration of the Arabic letters has been used in this book:

ا	ā
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh

ص	s̲
ض	d̲
ط	t̲
ظ	z̲
ع	à, í, ú
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
و	ū
ه	h
ي	ī, y

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله و كفي وسلام علي عباده الذين اصطفي

Introduction

This thesis is actually a paper delivered by Muftī Muhammad Shafī' Sāhib in Dhul Qa'dah 1385 A.H. in Lyllpur, Pakistan. Thereafter it was transcribed from cassette and changes were made by the learned author.

The English translation has been done in a book form by deleting the aspects related to the delivery of the paper and the author's personal comments about his inability etc.

Preface

Unity of the Ummah is such a clear reality that there can be no two opinions expressed in the matter. It is completely correct to say that the Ummah is an undividable unit but our present condition shows the realitv to be different. To provide evidence for this unity is a mere philosophy by which our needs

cannot be fulfilled.

Consequently, I decided to discuss the negative aspect more than the positive aspect. The negative aspect relates to our disunity and division, the causes and what the possible cures are.

It is not concealed from any Muslim that Islam invites towards unity and encourages all Muslims, in fact the whole of humanity to be one nation, one family and one brotherhood. The Qur'ān has declared all of mankind to be created from one soul and all Muslims as brothers.

During the farewell sermon, Rasūlullāh ﷺ addressed the largest gathering of Muslims at the time by providing principles of guidance. He emphatically stated that there was no distinction between white or black, Arab or non-Arab etc. All of mankind were created from the same parents. By means of this statement, he annihilated the idols of ignorant unity based on lineage, tribe, countries, colours or languages and made the basis of unity the worship of Allāh and Dīn.

This is the true unity which can unite all of mankind

in the east and the west and make them into one brotherhood.

This can be achieved by making an effort. Disunity has been brought into the ranks of people by creating unity of the period of ignorance based on lineage, country, colour and language. The 'enlightened minds' of today are again worshipping this unity. Such divisions have been caused among the classes of people, that no action or effort can efface them.

The one who is black cannot become white. The person who is not a Sayyid or Sheikh cannot become a Sayyid or Sheikh by making any kind of effort.

Islam has invited towards such unity in which all of mankind can participate without any difficulty. Because this unity is related to one Real Master who has no partner and to His obedience, it is undoubtedly indivisible.

This is a belief and an ideology written down in books and spoken on the tongues. However, when one examines the reality of the situation in real life, one finds complete division in which there seems very little likelihood of unity being achieved.

Islam has made the whole of mankind into one brotherhood and gathered them on the obedience of one Allāh ﷻ.

"He created you from one soul." (Sūrah Nisā)

Those who obeyed Allāh ﷻ have been likened to a wall of lead which is resolute and cannot be defeated.

The same Ummah today is distributed into many divisions and sects. Each one has severed its relations with the other. There are differences due to political parties, different lineages, professions and trades. The differences of the poor and rich classes were the foundations of dislike. Dīn and the worship of Allāh ﷻ was the conclusive treatment for making foreigners into locals and to remove the international, national and language differences. Today this has become a means of us disputing and quarrelling. This has brought the whole Ummah to the brink of disaster. No solution to this problem seems to be in sight.

Every organization and gathering of ours creates divisions. This is the illness which has made this

Ummah retrogress in spite of having numerical superiority. Every nation wants us to be dissolved among them. Every nation wants to make incursions into every facet of the life of Muslims, from beliefs to conduct and from culture and social life to commercial dealings and economics.

The lives of Muslims are being frustrated by governments, economics and businesses. On the other hand, by means of irreligious deception, their beliefs and ideologies are being shaken. The principles of their worship are being changed into worship of the carnal self by means of new education, culture and social upliftment programmes.

Our general masses are being deprived of the knowledge of Dīn due to the 150-year British rule by several methods. They are unaware of realities. Now they have squandered the wealth of knowledge lying in their own homes and have regarded every facet of the non-Muslims as a great fortune. This is especially so when under the shadow of this education and knowledge, the field of uncontrollable carnal desires and a life of luxury is exposed. Our Úlamā and the responsible people have become so entangled in

subsidiary differences and unnecessary issues as if they are unaware of the incursion on the borders of Islam.

The Causes of the Disease

Firstly I want to clarify at the outset that differences of opinion in ideological issues are neither harmful nor is there a need to efface them. They cannot be effaced in any case. Differences of opinion do not contradict Islamic unity nor are they harmful for anyone. Having differences of opinion is a natural occurrence from which no group of humans has remained free of nor can they remain free of it.

Only in two situations can there be a completely united opinion in any group or work. One is that there is no person who can ponder over the matter and adopt a position. In such a gathering, one person says something and all the others agree because they have no opinion or insight. The second situation is where the people are treacherous and sell themselves out. In spite of knowing that a certain position has been adopted and it will be harmful, they do not express their difference of opinion merely to please

others.

Where there is intelligence and honesty, it is impossible not to have differences in opinion. This shows that differences in opinion are created by intelligence and honesty. If one has to examine the conditions correctly, differences in opinion can never be harmful for any nation or group if it remains within limits. In fact, it creates many beneficial consequences. This is the reason for emphasizing and honouring consultation in Islam so that different views can come to the fore. The decision can then be made with much greater insight. If differences of opinion are regarded as blameworthy, the benefit of consultation will, as a result, be terminated.

Differences of Opinion among the Sahābah ﷺ and Tābi'īn

Differences of opinion were already expressed in the blessed era of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in administrative matters and matters of experience. There were also differences of opinion expressed in the era of the Khulafā (the four rightly-guided Khaliphs) and the general Sahābah ﷺ in matters besides administration

when new situations arose and there was no explicit solution mentioned in the Qur'ān or hadīth. This situation also arose when there was apparent contradiction between two verses of the Qur'ān or between two Ahādīth. They had to resort to deducing solutions by pondering over the sources of Sharī'ah. This difference of opinion was natural due to intelligence and honesty.

There were many differences in this august group of people in the minor details of adhān and salāh, acts of worship performed five times daily in the minarets and Musjids. There is no deficiency in their mutual discussions regarding these differences.

The differences of the Sahābah ﷺ are no hidden fact in non-divine texts or vague matters whether they deal with halāl or harām or whether they are permissible or not permissible.

Subsequently, the students of the Sahābah ﷺ, the Tābi'īn, adopted the stance of a certain Sahābī ﷺ in a particular issue while others adopted the stance of another Sahābī ﷺ in the same issue. After them came the Mujtahidīn and their followers. Throughout this blessed era, there was not a single incident where

one group called another, transgressors or misguided or prohibited others from following a particular group. There was no such incident where a person would walk into the Musjid and ask the worshippers what school of thought the Imām followed with regard to Sūrah Fātiḫah and raising of the hands etc. There was no question of fighting one another due to these differences, nor any disputes, abusive language, mocking and denigrating anyone in that noble era.

Imām Ibn Àbdul Barr Al-Qurtubī *raḫmatullāhi 'alaih* has described in his book, *'Jāmi' Bayānil Ílm Wafaḏlihī'*, the condition of the predecessors with regards to their differences as follows,

"Yahyā Ibn Sa'īd *raḫmatullāhi 'alaih* states the people of fatwā always continued issuing verdicts. One person would issue a fatwā of permissibility while another would issue the verdict of non-permissibility. However, the one who issued the verdict of non-permissibility did not regard his adversary as misguided and destroyed nor vice versa."

He has also mentioned in the same book that

Usāmah Ibn Zaid ﷺ asked the jurist of Madīnah, Qāsim Ibn Muhammad *rahmatullāhi 'alaih*, a question regarding a mas'alah in which there were differing opinions. He replied that from both these opinions, whichever one he adopted would be sufficient for him because the excellent practical example of the Sahābah ﷺ was existent on both sides.

A Doubt and its Response

The people who are unaware of the principles of Dīn and the causes of differences may raise the question, "How can one thing be halāl and harām at the same time in Islam?"

Obviously one has to be correct and the other incorrect. In that case, how can one equally respect both sides. Honesty is to label something wrong which one regards as wrong.

The response to this objection is that the issue is not with regard to general permissibility and non-permissibility because according to the text of the Qur'ān and Hadīth, certain things are explicitly harām, e.g. interest, wine, gambling, bribery etc.

There can be no two opinions in these issues. The pious predecessors could also not have had differences in these matters. To have any differences in these matters is rejecting the clear-cut commands of the Ummah and is tantamount to misguidance and irreligiousness. If a person creates differences, it will be the requirement of īmān to announce one's dissociation from such a person. It is prohibited to be tolerant in such a matter.

Toleration and respecting the view of others is only permissible in those aspects where there is no explicit order in the Qur'ān and Sunnah or they are mentioned but are not clear-cut. Without any explanation or clarification, it is not possible to practice them. There could possibly be an apparent contradiction in two verses or two narrations. In all these situations, the *mujtahid* has to ponder over the text of the Qur'ān and Sunnah and endeavour to find out what the aim of Sharī'ah is and what laws can be derived from it.

It is possible in such a case that one *mujtahid* may, after pondering, according to the principles of *ijtihād* of the Qur'ān, sunnah and practice of the Sahābah ﷺ, arrive at the conclusion that a certain act is

permissible while another *mujtahid* who uses the same principles arrives at the conclusion that the act is not permissible.

Both of them are entitled to reward from Allāh ﷻ. No one is worthy of censure. The one whose opinion was correct is entitled to double reward while the one who was incorrect will receive one reward.

Accordingly, some scholars are of the opinion that in differences of *ijtihād,* both conflicting views are correct. The reason for this is that Allāh ﷻ does not want any particular action. He is merely testing the obedience of His slaves. When both have used the strength of their *ijtihād* and their mental capacities according to the correct conditions, both have fulfilled their obligations. Therefore both are correct. However, the majority of the Ummah and the Mujtahid Imāms are of the opinion that in the knowledge of Allāh ﷻ, one of them is correct. Those people who obtain the truth by means of their *ijtihād* are successful in all respects and entitled to double reward. Those who exerted themselves but did not reach the truth, are excused. They are not blameworthy. They will receive the reward of their endeavours.

An Important Incident

We used to hold a *jalsah* every year in Qadyān. Moulānā Sayyid Muhammad Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *rahmatullāhi 'alaih* used to participate in it. One year when he came, I also joined him. One day at the time of Fajr, I went to see him and found him sitting in the dark, holding his head in grief. I asked him what the matter was. He replied that he was feeling fine. He only regretted wasting his life.

I commented, "Hadrat, your entire life has been spent in the service of knowledge and in the propagation of Dīn. Thousands of your students are Úlamā. They are famous and have benefited from you. They are all serving Dīn. If your life has been wasted, then whose life has been profitable?"

Moulānā Anwar: I am telling you the truth. I have wasted my life.

Muftī Shafī: Hadrat, what is the matter?

Moulānā Anwar: The summary of all our endeavours, our life and our lectures was that the

Hanafī school of thought is superior to others. We searched for the proofs of the *masāil* of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahmatullāhi 'alaih* and proved them to be stronger than the other Imāms.

Now I am pondering and wondering in what have I wasted my life. Was Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahmatullāhi 'alaih* in need of our giving preference to him? Did we have to do him a favour? The people have acknowledged the position which Allāh ﷻ had given him. He is not in need of us.

What is the result of the preference we are giving over Imām Shāfi'ī, Imām Mālik and Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal *rahmatullāhi 'alaihim* and the jurists of other schools? It is nothing more than saying that our school of thought is correct with the possibility of error while other schools of thought are incorrect with the possibility of being correct. There is no other result besides this in our research.

On the day of resurrection, we will not be informed of the secret of who was correct and who was wrong. There can be no decision in *masāil* of *ijtihād* in the world. After all our research, the most we can conclude in the world is that this school is correct

and that one is also correct. Or we can say that this school is correct but there is the possibility that it is incorrect and that one is wrong with the possibility that it is correct. This is what will happen in the world. As for the grave, even the angels *Munkar* and *Nakīr* will not ask whether raising the hands in salāh is correct or not raising them is correct. *Āmin* uttered softly is correct or audibly. There will be no question regarding these issues in the life of *barzakh*[1] as well as in the grave.

These were the words of Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahmatullāhi 'alaih*:
Allāh ﷻ will neither disgrace Abū Hanīfah, nor Shāfi'ī, neither Mālik nor Ahmad Ibn Hanbal *rahmatullāhi 'alaihim*. Allāh ﷻ will not disgrace those to whom He has given the knowledge of His Dīn and to whom a great portion of His creation has been attached. They spread the light of guidance everywhere. They spent their lives in spreading the light of the Sunnah. He will not make them stand on the day of Qiyāmah and ask them whether Abū Hanīfah *rahmatullāhi 'alaih* was correct or Shāfi'ī *rahmatullāhi 'alaih* was wrong or vice versa.

[1] The intermediary stage between this world and the hereafter.

We went after something that we did not need to bleach in this world, in the life of *barzakh* or the hereafter and thus wasted our lives. We used our energy for it instead of using it for the correct propagation of Islam which is unanimously accepted by everyone. Today we are not inviting towards the important aspects of Dīn which the Ambiyā ﷺ brought. We have been commanded to propagate these aspects and make them widespread. We have been ordered to efface wrong and evil. These essentials of Dīn are blurred from the eyes of people. They are being distorted by us and by others. Those evils which we are supposed to combat are spreading all over. Misguidance and irreligiousness are spreading all over. Polytheism and idol-worship are taking root. The differentiation between halāl and harām is disappearing but we are engrossed in these subsidiary issues.

I am sitting aggrieved and feeling as if I have wasted my life.

DifferencesAmong the Pious Predecessors

Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* has stated regarding the differences among the Sahābah ﷺ,
"From the conflicting views, one is wrong but the sin of the error has been forgiven."[2]

When Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* was asked about the differences among the Sahābah ﷺ, he replied,

"Some of them were wrong while others were right. The *mujtahidīn* should ponder over the statements and specify one for practice."[3]

Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* has clarified in this statement of his that both views are not correct. One is correct while the other is wrong. He also said that it is not permissible to dispute and argue over these conflicting statements. If someone is wrong, one should gently inform him of the error. If he accepts the error, well and good and if he does not accept, one should remain silent. There is absolutely no need for squabbles and abusive language.

[2] Jāmi' Bayānil Ilm Wafadlihī vol.2 p. 3.
[3] Ibid.

Imām Mālik *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* has stated,

"Disputing and arguing regarding knowledge removes the light of knowledge from the heart of man. Someone asked, "If a person has knowledge of the Sunnah, can he dispute in order to protect the Sunnah?" He replied in the negative and said, "He should inform him of the correct view. If he accepts, well and good, otherwise remain silent. Refrain from disputes."[4]

Muhammad Ibn Àbdur Ra<u>h</u>mān As-Sayrafī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* asked Imām A<u>h</u>mad Ibn <u>H</u>anbal *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* that if the <u>S</u>a<u>h</u>ābah ﷺ had a difference among themselves in a certain issue, would it be permissible for people to ponder over their statements and decide which one was correct.

Imām A<u>h</u>mad Ibn <u>H</u>anbal *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* replied, "People should not ponder over the differences of the Sahābah ﷺ of Nabī ﷺ."

Muhammad Ibn Àbdur Ra<u>h</u>mān As-Sayrafī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* then asked whose statement must be

[4] Aujazul Masālik vol. 1 p. 15.

practised and how.
He replied, "Adopt any one of them for practice." [5]

From amongst the Imāms of *ijtihād,* Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* and Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* are of the opinion that if the Sahābah ﷺ had mutual differences, the jurists of the later eras should ponder over the details and adopt the view that was closest to the Sunnah. Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* on the other hand was of the view that there was no need for even this. There were Sahābah ﷺ on both sides. Accordingly, one could adopt either of the two views.

Ubayy Ibn Ka'b ﷺ and Àbdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ had a difference of opinion in a certain *mas'alah*. When Úmar ﷺ heard about it, he was enraged and came out saying how regretful a situation that two of the Sahābah ﷺ, to whom the people look up to, are disputing. People benefit from them with regards to Dīn. Then he decided between them as follows,
"Ubayy's ﷺ opinion is correct but Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ has also not been deficient in his *ijtihād*." Then Úmar ﷺ said that he did not want to see anyone disputing in

[5] Jāmi' Bayānil Ílm Wafadlihī vol. 2 p. 83.

such issues anymore otherwise he would punish them.[6]

This statement of Úmar ﷺ indicates that in issues of *ijtihād*, one statement is correct but the other is also not worthy of censure. Secondly, it is not suitable to stress too much on issues in which there are differences of opinion. This results in censure, disputes and the danger of quarrels.

According to Imām Shāfi'ī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*, the *mujtahidīn* should not regard each other as wrong in their opinions, that is, one should not say to the other, "You are wrong."[7]

In *ijtihādī masāil*, no one has the right to regard his view as being completely correct and the view of others as being wrong. After making *ijtihād* and pondering, one can only say regarding one's own view that it is correct but there is the possibility of it being wrong and it is also possible that the other person's view is correct.

[6] Jāmi' Bayānil Ílm Wafa<u>d</u>lihī vol. 2 p. 84.
[7] Ibid.

In short, according to the majority of scholars, in differences of *ijtihād*, from the two differing views, one is correct. However, no one has the certain means of specifying the correct view. The possibility of being correct or incorrect lies on both sides. The *mujtahid* ponders and chooses one aspect for practising.

An Important Statement

Àllāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* once stated that the general scholars are engrossed in finding out whose *ijtihād* is correct and whose is incorrect in *ijtihādī masāil* and they spend most of their energy in this regard. He felt that the result of such *ijtihād* being correct or incorrect, will not even be announced in the field of reckoning, let alone the world. This is due to the fact that Allāh ﷻ has rewarded a *mujtahid* one reward even if he is incorrect. His incorrect *ijtihād* has thus been veiled. It is therefore far-fetched to think that the most noblest Being would announce someone's error in the field of reckoning and thereby disgrace him.

The result of this is that there will be no decisive

result, neither in this world nor the hereafter, with regard to the differences the Sahābah ﷺ, the Tābi'īn and the Mujtahidīn had. It was made permissible for those who wanted to practice to adopt any view according to the preference they gave. The one who practised has absolved himself of the obligation. According to the consensus of opinion, he will not be regarded as one who has discarded a *fard*. No matter how much research a person does, it is not possible to regard his research as definitely correct and the opposing view as incorrect. Imām Shamsud-Dīn Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* said that the differences of the Sahābah ﷺ and the Tābi'īn can never be erased till the day of Qiyāmah. The reason for this is in that case one group would have to be regarded as definitely correct while the other definitely wrong and this is not possible.

The Differences of the Imāms

From the Sharī'ah point of view, no aspect can be regarded as wrong in a *mas'alah* in which the Sahābah, Tābi'īn and Imāms had differences. The foundation of both opinions is based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah and their accepted principles.

Consequently, both categories fall under virtues. The most one can say is that one view is preferred over the other. Accordingly, the obligation of inviting towards virtue and forbidding from evil does not fall on anyone in this regard. To criticize something not in the category of vice is a vice itself.

The pious predecessors had numerous differences with regard to permissibility and non-permissibility but no criticism of one another has ever been transmitted from them as one criticizes a vice. No one ever labelled another as a sinner or transgressor or the perpetrator of a crime. Imām Shāfi'ī's *rahimahullāh* statement reported by Hāfiz Ibn 'Abdul Barr *rahimahullāh* bears testimony to this. He has mentioned that it is not permissible for one *mujtahid* to regard another as wrong.

The Conditions of Ijtihād

There is a proof in the statement of Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* that a mujtahid should not regard another as being wrong because each one has fulfilled his obligation. This will be if the conditions of *ijtihād* and *qiyās* are to be found in him and he has

the ability to execute *ijtihād*.

From this it becomes clear that two opposing views will only be respected and none of the *mujtahids* will be regarded as wrong if the conditions of *ijtihād* are met. It must not be the ignorant *ijtihād* propounded by the people of today who don't even know Arabic nor do they have any contact with the Qur'ān and Hadīth. By means of English translations, they begin practising on the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Such *ijtihād* is a sin in itself and the resulting opinion is a sin as well. This is misguidance which has to be reproached.

The Conflict between Sunnah and Bid'ah

A difference prevalent in our society is one caused by the titles of **sunnah** and **bid'ah** (innovation). Many people have discarded the correct principles of the Qur'ān and Sunnah and adopted their own opinions. They have formulated new *masāil*. This is the difference which the Qur'ān and Sunnah have warned the Muslims about. It is beneficial to terminate this difference or reduce it. However, the Qur'ān has provided a special way in which this should be done. The gulf of differences will be reduced in this manner. These are the principles of

inviting towards virtue in which the first step is using wisdom and tact, then advice and sympathy and a gentle manner that is palatable to the listener. Finally one has to provide proof in the best possible manner and create an understanding.

Regrettably today, the people of knowledge have discarded these principles. They are only involved in disputes and that too, without any conditions. They use all kinds of means, whether the means are permissible or not. They indulge in lies and fabrications and mock their adversaries in order to defeat them. The result is that the dispute becomes very heated but there is no beneficial result for the people.

The Causes of the Division of the Ummah

The reason for delving into the above-mentioned details was due to the fact that the people of Dīn, those involved in reformation and those involved in other religious services have generally discarded these realities.

Now I wish to present some of the causes which, in

my opinion, are the reasons for the divisions among the Muslims. Regrettably, these acts are done in the name of serving Dīn.

Exceeding Limits

A major factor of division in the Ummah is partisanship and to regard anyone else with an opposing view in *ijtihādī masāil* as being void and a sin and to treat such people as one would treat the misguided and deviated ones.

For those who have not reached the stage of *ijtihād*, the entire Ummah is unanimous and logically there is no other alternative for them but to follow a *mujtahid imām*. The people who, in order to withhold their carnal selves from freedom and worshipping their desires, follow an *imām* and regard it as a religious expediency, naturally become one *jamā'ah* (group). Similarly, the followers of another *imām* become another group. If groups are formed in a positive manner limited to *ijtihādī masāil* for the sake of simplifying the matter of practice and learning, there is no harm and no division will be created.

The harmful and negative way is when one, due to one's own opinion, disputes with others. The second harmful aspect is to exceed the limits in these subsidiary *masāil* and spend one's valuable time and energy in these discussions. All this is done while the fundamentals of Islam are being destroyed and disbelief is spreading throughout the world. We have turned our attention away from these essential issues towards unimportant aspects for which the most that can be said, even after all our research, is that this view is preferable over the other. The final outcome of these views as to which one is preferable and which one is not, will not be announced in this world nor in the hereafter. One will not be questioned about them in the field of reckoning nor will any announcement be made as to which view was correct.

It is neither correct to denigrate a person who holds a differing view in these *masāil* nor is it correct to label him as a criminal. At this point, if one has to examine the saintly group of our society, the *Úlamā* and *Fuqahā* (Jurists), one will find that most of their energies are spent in subsidiary *masāil*.

A Moment to Ponder

The exaggeration of some people has reached the limit that they label the s̲alāh of their adversaries as being null and void and they label him as one who rejects the Qur'ān. They invite towards their school of thought as a rejector of Islam is invited towards Islam and they regard this as the greatest service to Islam.

Perhaps these people are unaware of the attacks on Islam from all four sides or they are deliberately overlooking them. At this point in time, the kufr of Christianity and Communism has enveloped the Islamic countries and circles. Both these forms of disbelief are spreading in the Muslim countries like a flood. Every year thousands of people are abandoning Islam in Pakistan alone.

On the other hand, hypocrisy and apostasy are robbing the Muslims of their *imān*, sometimes in the name of Qadiyanism, sometimes in the garment of Parwezism, rejecting h̲adīth or the freedom of the west which makes every h̲arām act h̲alāl.

This apostasy and hypocrisy is more dangerous than the former form of disbelief because it comes with the titles of Islam and Qur'ān. Simple Muslims are easily duped while the western educated youth are attracted in large numbers because the modern education and society have thrown them far away from religious education and Islamic principles. In spite of being experts in secular education, they do not even have a smattering of basic Islamic teachings.

If a fortunate Muslim escapes the above-mentioned categories of kufr, can he be saved from the poisonous environment of immodesty, pornography, dancing, clubs, music and the cinema?

The Muslims of today who take the name of Islam and the Qur'ān are drowned in all kinds of crimes and evil conduct. Our shopping centres are filled with falsehood, deceit, interest and gambling. Yet no Jew or Hindu is running our businesses. They are all run by those who call themselves Muslims. Our governmental offices are the training grounds of bribery, oppression, theft, cruelty and hard-heartedness. The employees there are not Englishmen or Hindus. They are the ones who take the name of Muhammad ﷺ and who claim to believe

in the hereafter. Our public is grossly ignorant of the knowledge of Dīn and are drowning in ignorance. They are unaware of the essentials of Dīn. They practise polytheistic customs and are involved in play and amusement.

Under these conditions, is it not compulsory for us to ponder over the matter and find out what Rasūlullāh ﷺ requires of the people of knowledge? If Rasūlullāh ﷺ had to ask us on the field of reckoning where we, the claimants of the inheritors of the prophet, were when the Sharī'ah was being attacked and the Ummah was in such a deplorable state, will this answer of ours be sufficient that we wrote a book of *rafa' yadain* (raising the hands in salāh), or we explained very clearly the chapter of *hāsil mahsūl* to the students of *Sharh Jāmī,* or we delivered very interesting lectures on the *ijtihādī* issues mentioned in the hadīth or we used our journalistic capabilities and thoroughly disgraced other Úlamā?

It is not a despised act to search and investigate subsidiary and *ijtihādī masāil* as long as it remains within limits and is done sincerely to please Allāh ﷻ. However, we see the foundations of Islam being shaken by corruption, the laws of Allāh ﷻ and His

Rasūl ﷺ being violated, in fact mocked and yet it does not affect us. What hope is there then that we are investigating these subsidiary *masāil* with sincerity? Had there been the slightest vestige of sincerity in it, we would have recognized the needs of Dīn under these conditions. Instead of subsidiary issues, we would have been engrossed in the protection of fundamental principles. It is as if we have understood the service of Dīn to be limited to these subsidiary issues. We have spent all our energies on these aspects. We have left the principles and foundations of Islam open to the incursions of the enemies. Where we should have been fighting and on which frontier have we spent our force?

إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

"Indeed we belong to Allāh and to Him is our return."

This is the result of extremity in partisanship and sectarianism.

The second major error in these *ijtihādī masāil* is to go beyond the limits of differences and begin disputing, quarrelling, fighting and mocking one another which is not permissible in any religion. Regrettably, this is

all done in the name of serving religion. When this matter reaches the general masses who follow the Ulamā, they fight regarding it as a *jihād*. It is obvious that if a nation fights with itself, where will it have the opportunity to protect its own assets and combat apostasy and disbelief.

This surpassing of the limits has been referred to as *tafarruq* (division) in the Qur'ān and Hadīth. It is something different from the permitted difference of opinion. It is mentioned in a verse of the Qur'ān,

واعتصموا بحبل الله جميعا ولا تفرقوا

"Hold firmly onto the rope of Allāh and do not be divided."

In another verse, Allāh ﷻ renders advice and this advice was rendered to all the previous messengers عليهم السلام. He says,

أن أقيموا الدين ولا تتفرقوا فيه

"Establish Dīn and do not be divided."

Abul Āliyah *rahimahullāh*, the *Imām* of *tafsīr*, says that establishing Dīn refers to sincerity while not being divided means not having mutual enmity. People should live as brothers.

After rendering this advice, the Qur'ān mentions the division of the Banū Isrāīl and has subsequently warned the Muslims not to tread on their path. Allāh ﷻ says,

وما تفرقوا الا من بعد ما جاءهم العلم بغيا بينهم

"They were not divided except after knowledge came to them, having enmity among themselves."

Abul Āliyah states that the words (بغيا بينهم) indicate that such division which leads to enmity and fighting can never be due to the sake of Dīn.[8] The cause of this enmity can only be the world, love for wealth and love for position. The *nafs* (carnal self) and *shaytān* beautify these acts by labelling them as acts for the service of Dīn.

[8] Jāmi' Bayānil Ilm Wafadlihī vol. 2 p. 84.

The limit in this type of difference is the positive aspect as mentioned previously that one should choose a view to adopt for practice and not dispute with the upholders of the opposing view. This is similar to the situation in this world when a person falls ill, he chooses a doctor for his treatment and places his trust on him only. He practises whatever the doctor says while at the same time he does not go around criticizing other doctors.

When you appoint a lawyer to fight your case, you don't go around abusing and vilifying other lawyers. This should be your conduct with regard to *ijtihādī masāil* in which there is a difference of opinion.

The Extremism of Groups

We have many religious groups amongst us that are established for teaching Dīn, advising people, propagating and reforming. They are doing sterling work in their respective fields. There are many Úlamā and pious people working in these groups. If these groups unite and distribute the work among themselves to combat the attacks against Dīn and help each other to the best of their abilities, each one

regards the other as a helping hand for establishing the common purposes of Dīn, appreciates the work of other groups as it appreciates its own work, then these different groups can become a colossal strength of Islam even by working within their own perimeters. They would be able to fulfil most of the needs of Dīn by work distribution.

However, what is happening is that every group has demarcated its line of action. In practice, it seems as if each group has regarded the serving of Dīn to be limited to its own work, although they may not say so verbally. If a group is not fighting with the other groups, it will certainly not appreciate their work. As a result, a kind of division has been created among the groups. After a critical examination, it seems as if the cause is that each group has chosen its own field to work in although everyone's aim is the same, namely to propagate and protect Dīn and to reform the educational, practical and social life of the Muslims. Some people have established a *Dārul Ūlūm* for teaching Dīn, some have formed a *jamā'at* for *tablīgh* to guide people, some have established an organization for Islamic literature, some have established a *Dārul Iftā* to issue legal verdicts while some have established weekly or monthly journals or

newspapers to combat the propagation against Islam.

All these tasks, although outwardly may seem different, but in reality are parts of one whole. It is obvious that each group is working on a different front and their work will also be different. Consequently, each group has made a system and outlined principles and methods for itself to work in, according to its environment in order to simplify matters. It is obvious that the original aim is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Deviating from this path is tantamount to going beyond the boundaries of the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

However, this system devised by the people and its principles are neither explicit words of the Qur'ān and Sunnah nor is it obligatory for each person to follow them. The responsible people of the organization have adopted these principles for the sake of ease. They themselves make changes in these principles according to the need. To adopt another system due to changing circumstances and environments is not regarded as impermissible by anyone. However, practical extremism is found in almost every group whereby they have given their system divine status. Whoever does not participate

in their system of operation, even though he may be doing such tremendous work of Dīn, is not regarded as a brother or partner. If anyone was part of the system, then for some reason or the other, could not continue participating, he is regarded as being deviated from the original aim and off the path of Dīn. He is treated like a person who has deviated from the path of Dīn should be treated, even though he may be involved in establishing Dīn to a greater extent than before. The result of this extremism gives rise to the perils of partisanship and sectarianism even among religiously-minded people. This kind of partisanship is to be found normally among ignorant ones.

Discarding the Ambiyâs عليهم السلام (Prophetic) Invitation

The most important factor that has wasted our propagatory and reformative efforts and that has widened the chasm of divisions and disputes is that the authors and Úlamā have discarded the Ambiyâ's methods of propagation and reformation. Instead, they have adopted journalistic methods in order to create weight in their words and endeavoured to make it more effective. It is clear from experience

that this is a most luckless method in which there is no vestige of hope in reforming a person in error or misguidance. This modus operandi makes a person more obstinate and instead of reformation, it sows the seeds of enmity in the hearts. The fire of animosity is kindled.

Yes, it may provide some entertainment and pleasure for one's own kind. By their praises, the authors also begin to feel they have served Dīn in a most commendable way.

But ask the people who are addressed by these topics whether their hearts are in the least touched by them or do they have any conviction of the truth of these statements. Is this mocking tone not a way of preventing them from approaching the truth. Does it not make these people the enemies of the one who invites?

The Four Elements of the Ambiyâ's ﷺ Invitation

In contrast to that, note the method of propagation of the Messengers of Allāh ﷺ. The words are simple but full of human compassion. After listening to the

harshest of speech of their antagonists, they reply in a simple, soft and gentle manner. They do not indulge in passing sarcastic remarks. Their hearts are full of human sympathy having the desire that the person being addressed should somehow accept the message. They plan for this with wisdom. The spirit of the propagation of the Ambiyâ ﷺ can be understood from the word '*nadhīr*' which has been used for every Nabī in the Qur'ān.

The Messengers ﷺ have been labelled as '*bashīr*' and '*nadhīr*' in the Qur'ān in several verses. '*Nadhīr*' means 'a warner' but due to the deficiency in the English language, the word 'warner' alone does not provide the full meaning. There are different categories of warning. A thief or robber also warns. One is warned by a predator or enemy as well. A kind father warns his son about a scorpion, snake, poison and fire. The first type is merely frightening. A thief, enemy or predator cannot be termed as '*nadhīr*'. The second category, where a kind father warns with sympathy and compassion from harmful or hurtful things, is termed as '*nadhīr*'. The Ambiyâ ﷺ have been called '*nadhīr*' to indicate the spirit of their propagation and education. They do not merely convey a message. They endeavour to make their

message as effective as possible with complete compassion and sympathy in order to save the people from destruction.

The principles of the propagation of the Ambiyâ ﷺ mentioned in the Qur'ān are a sort of explanation of the word '*nadhīr*'. Allāh ﷻ says,

أدع الي سبيل ربك بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة وجادلهم باللتي هي أحسن

"Invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom, good advice and argue with them in the best manner."

From the etiquette of inviting towards Allāh ﷻ, the first one to be mentioned is that of wisdom. This means that the inviter must not merely convey the message to the people, but he should use wisdom and tact, in a suitable time and in an appropriate environment to convey the message in such a manner that is easy for the listener.

The second factor is *mau'izah* (advice) which means to call sympathetically towards a good act. This shows that it is necessary for the inviter to be

sympathetic when speaking.

The third factor is the addition of *'hasanah'* to the word *'mau'izah'*. This is an indication that the subject matter must be conveyed gently and in a convincing manner because sometimes a person is invited towards virtue out of sincere compassion but the topic and the method of conveying is harsh. Such propagation is not effective. Hence the need for it to be gentle and convincing.

In short, this verse has shown that there are three essential factors from among the etiquettes of the propagation of Ambiyâ ﷺ. Firstly, there must be wisdom and tact. The invitation will then not go to waste. Secondly, one should invite with sympathy and compassion towards a virtuous act. Thirdly, the topic of the invitation should be palatable and gentle.

Finally, the verse has indicated that if the invitation is not accepted even after presenting it in the correct manner, and the opportunity of debating arises, then it must be done in the best possible manner.

Àllāmah Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* has explained it as follows,

"with gentleness, good advice and an excellent address". In Tafsīr Ma<u>z</u>harī, it is mentioned that it means one should not express one's anger nor show the greatness of one's self. It must be for the sake of Allāh ﷻ in order to proclaim the word of truth. This method of gentle debate, sympathy and good advice is not confined to Muslims only, but the same guidance has been given to the Ambiyâ ﷺ when it comes to the non-Muslims as well.

It is stated in a verse of the Qur'ān that when the occasion arises to debate with the disbelieving people of the book, it should be done gently, in a good manner with good advice.

The Excellent Example of the Ambiyâ ﷺ

Examine each incident of reformation and propagation of the Messengers ﷺ in the Qur'ān and <u>H</u>adīth and you will find the efforts of their entire lives in this manner.

Nū<u>h</u> ﷺ spent 950 years inviting his people and explaining to them with sympathy and compassion. In spite of this, when his nation treated him harshly

in an uncultured manner and labelled him as a fool, do you know what reply this accepted Nabî of Allāh ﷺ rendered.

يقوم ليس بي سفاهة ولكني رسول من رب العالمين

"O my nation, I am not a fool but I am a messenger from the Lord of the worlds."

The life of our beloved Nabī ﷺ, the leader of the worlds is open testimony to this. After enduring all kinds of torments from his nation, let alone cursing them, he even supplicated for their benefit by saying, "Guide my nation because they do not know."

Those Úlamā who received a portion of the inheritance of the Ambiyâ ﷺ also propagated in a like manner. Sayyid Ismāīl Shahīd *rahimahullāh* ended delivering a lecture in the Jāmi' Musjid of Delhi and was going out when some gangsters stopped him. They said, "We heard you are a bastard." Moulānā replied with complete composure, "You have received the wrong information. The witnesses of my mother's *nikāh* are still alive today."

He knew that their aim was merely to abuse and torment him. But the inheritor of a Nabī replied in such a manner that he explained a *mas'alah* in reply to their vilification.

The Method of Nubuwwah (Prophethood)

In reality, only the Ambiyâ ﷺ or the inheritors of the Ambiyâ ﷺ can do the work of reformation and propagation. They sacrifice at every step and are compassionate to the enemies. There is no vestige of defamation of any antagonist in their conduct or speech. They do not ponder about passing sarcastic remarks in reply to their antagonists. They do not choose the path of accusation. The effect of this is that after the opposition of a few days, extremely rebellious people had to bow their heads down. They had to obey the Ambiyâ ﷺ. Today we have regrettably moved so far away from the excellent example of the prophets that our speech and writing do not contain any effect of their methods.

Today, the perfection of the propagators and reformers is understood to be their accusations and attempts to disgrace the opposition. They utter inappropriate statements. In today's times, this is

referred to as eloquence.

إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

"Indeed we belong to Allāh and to Him is our return."

When Allāh ﷻ despatches His Ambiyâ عليهم السلام to propagate to a tyrant disbeliever like Fir'oun, He gives great Ambiyâ عليهم السلام like Mūsā عليه السلام and Hārūn عليه السلام the following guidelines,

قولا له قولا لينا لعله يتذكر أو يخشي

"Speak gently to him. Perhaps he may come onto the path or fear."

Today none of our propagators or reformers are greater than Mūsā عليه السلام and Hārūn عليه السلام and their subjects are not more misguided than Fir'oun. How has it become permissible for them to dispute with someone who has an opposing view to theirs? How can they begin mocking them and then feel pleased with themselves that they have done a great service to Dīn? They furthermore harbour hopes that the people will accept their endeavours.

At this point, these are the three factors in my opinion which have disunited the Muslims. Every gathering produces division, every organization results in disagreement, the result of every reformation is discord and the consequence of every propagation is hatred. Would that we gathered and pondered and thought about our own reformation before the reformation of others. This is the actual disease. Our hearts are not bereft of the love of wealth, position, jealousy and dislike for others. We are extremely proud of the fact that we refrain from theft, bribery, interest, wine, dancing and the cinema and we perform salāh and fast. This should not be only for the sake of our position of being Úlamā because this profession does not allow it. Had we refrained from these acts sincerely for the sake of Allāh ﷻ, we would also have refrained from the love of wealth and position, jealousy, dislike, pride and showing off. The filth of these sins is not lesser than that of interest and wine. But these internal sins can come together with our turbans and *jubbās*. Therefore we do not bother about them. This is the factor that is the foundation of all estrangements. May Allāh ﷻ grant us all the ability to refrain from all these calamities so that we can be united and carry out the work of propagation and reformation according to

the enthusiasm and etiquette of the Ambiyâ عليهم السلام.

Summary

It is not a hidden fact from the thinkers that at this moment, the main cause of the calamities of the Muslims in all places is the division and disunity among themselves. As far as numerical superiority and material means are concerned, throughout history, the Muslims have never had greater power than what they have today.

When one ponders over the reasons for this disunity, the reason for it is negligence of Allāh ﷻ and the hereafter. Like other nations, we have also let our reigns loose in pursuing the temporary wealth and honour of this world.

Our desires are destroying our society, sometimes in the form of political power struggles, business competition and mutual clashes for positions.

Sometimes our religious ideologies and differing systems cause us to mock one another. Had the focus of our attention been *kufr* and apostasy, as the S̲ah̲ābah رضي الله عنهم did, in spite of having differences, the

different groups of Muslims would have become like one *saff* (row) and one firm wall.

A Request to the Responsible Úlamã

At present, we cannot prevent immoderation in the political and economic fields as well as in the race for honour and positions. However, the different ideologies of our religious groups can be moderated. If we consider the correct purpose of the protection of the fundamental principles of Islam and the combating of the flood of religious apostasy, this is the point of unity on which all the Muslim groups can function together. At that time, they can be effective in combating this flood.

However, a perusal of the conditions indicates that this original aim has been concealed from our sight. Consequently, all the energies of our research and education are spent on *masãil* of differences. They are the subject of our lectures, *jalsahs*, journals and newspapers. Due to this action of ours, the general public is forced to think that Islam is limited to these two things. Anything contrary to whatever direction they have chosen, is regarded as misguidance and

opposition to Islam. As a result, the energy which we were supposed to spend against disbelief, apostasy and the ever-spreading shamelessness in our society, is used up in mutual wrangling. The front towards which Islam is calling us to fight in and to render sacrifices, has been left vacant for the incursion of the disbelievers.

Our society is full of social evils. Our actions and our conduct have been destroyed. There is deception in our dealings and treaties. Interest, gambling, wine, pork, indecency and adultery has permeated every nook and cranny of our lives. The question is why the inheritors of the Ambiyâ ﷺ and the responsible people of Dīn do not even express half the anger against the rebels of Allāh ﷻ that we express against those who have opposing ideologies from us? Why is the force of *īmān* that we express at the time of ideological differences not manifested at this important front. Why is the force of our tongues and our pens not used against the incursion that is made against the principles of *īmān* and its borders as we use it in the *masāil* of differences in the form of a *jihad*? Why don't we all become a lead wall in front of the endeavours (of the enemy) to make Muslims apostates?

Why do we not ponder at the mission of the Ambiyâ ﷺ and the purpose of the Qur'ān which brought a revolution in the world, made foreigners into our own, removed the son of Ādam ﷺ from animalism to humanity and which blessed the entire world with Islam. Was it only these *masāil* in which we are wrangling that achieved this? Is the method we have adopted and become embroiled in the way to guide others to the right path and the way of the Ambiyâ ﷺ.

الم يأن للذين آمنوا أن تخشع قلوبهم لذكر الله وما نزل من الحق

"Has the time not come that the hearts of the believers bow down to the mention of Allāh and the revealed truth."

When will the time come for us to go beyond our ideological differences and regard the protection of the fundamentals of Islam as our obligations. We should find out about the advancing flood of Christianity and Communism in the country. We should combat using the prophetic model, the scourge of Qadiyanism, rejection of hadīth and the organizations established for the uprooting of Dīn.

If we do not do this, what will be our reply to our Nabī Muhammad ﷺ on the day of reckoning when he will say that disbelief was being spread in the name of Islam, continuous efforts were being made to change my Ummah into that of my enemies, open interpolation of the Qurān and Sunnah was occurring and an open disobedience of Allāh ﷻ and His Rasūl ﷺ was taking place. Where were the claimants of knowledge at that time? How much of effort and sacrifice did they make for that challenge? How many misguided people were brought onto the right track? Today we should ponder what answer we are going to proffer.

Strategy

It is my sincere request to those Úlamā who have some feeling for Islam and the principles and aims of *īmān* to keep the delicateness of the purpose in front of them and firstly to make a pledge in their hearts to use their physical and educational capabilities in that front which the Qur'ān and Hadīth are calling one to.

The Úlamā should also pledge to take out the maximum time for this task from their present preoccupations. Secondly, they should limit their

mutual ideological differences to their lessons, writings and *fatwās*. They should not stir up these differences in public gatherings, newspapers, pamphlets, debates and disputes. They should adopt the prophetic methods even in these circles and refrain from hurtful expressions, denigrating others, mockery and passing remarks like the journalists. Thirdly, they should begin working towards removing the ills of society in a pleasant and compassionate manner. Fourthly, they should spend the energies of their tongues and pens using the wise methods of the Messengers ﷺ to combat apostasy and the interpolation of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. This must be in accordance to the verse of debating in the best manner.

These are the words of a pained heart which have been expressed by my tongue. It was regrettably not my position to do this nor to be so audacious in front of the Úlamā. If there are any beneficial points in my talk, adopt them. I have hope that if the Úlamā focus their attention in this direction and begin working, Allāh ﷻ will assist according to His promise. We will be able to witness this help with our own eyes.

ان أريد الا الاصلاح ما استطعت وما توفيقي الا بالله عليه توكلت واليه انيب

Differences of the Ummah and the Solution

Moulānā Muftī Muhammad Shafī' *rahimahullāh* delivered a lecture with the title "Differences of the Ummah and the Solution" on another occasion. This in reality was a completion of the paper "Unity of the Ummah". It is therefore being published together with the latter to make it a complete discussion, so that the details of the disease and the cure can simultaneously be examined.

Preamble

When Sheikhul Hind Moulānā Mahmūdul Hasan *rahimahullāh* was released from the prison of Malta after spending four years of incarceration, he returned to Dārul Úlūm Deoband and mentioned something very important to a gathering of Úlamā.

Those people who knew Sheikhul Hind *rahimahullāh* also know that his imprisonment was not like the imprisonment of normal political leaders. During the war of independence, all his movements were only for the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ in order that the Ummah

be reformed and successful. While he was a traveller in a hopeless condition, at the time of his arrest, the sentence that was on his lips gives some indication of his resoluteness and his aim. He said,
"All praises are due to Allāh ﷻ that I have been arrested due to a problem and not due to sin."

In the solitude of the jail, when some of his companions saw him in grief, they attempted to console him. He said, "What grief can there be for this problem which will one day terminate. I am grieving whether this hardship and toil will be accepted by Allāh ﷻ or not."

One night, after his release, he addressed the Úlamā after Íshā in Dārul Úlūm and said,
"I have learnt two lessons in Malta." On hearing this, everyone shot to attention and wondered what this teacher of all teachers who taught Úlamā for eighty years, learnt in the final phase of his life.

He said, "I pondered in the solitude of the prison why the Muslims in the whole world are being destroyed with regard to both, their religious and worldly lives, I concluded that there are two causes for this. One is their discarding the Qur'ān and

secondly, their mutual differences and disputes. Accordingly, I have come with a firm intention from there to spend the rest of my life in spreading the Qur'ān by making its words and meanings common. Madrasahs should be established to teach the children Qur'ān in every village. The adults should be educated with the meanings of the Qur'ān in the form of Qur'ānic lessons. They should be encouraged to practise on the Qur'ānic teachings. Under no circumstances must the mutual disputes and quarrels of the Muslims be tolerated."

After taking the pulse of the Ummah and diagnosing their diseases, he continuously spent the remaining days of his life in administering the cure in spite of his ill health, weakness and preoccupations. He himself started lessons of the Qur'ān in which all the Úlamā of the city and great luminaries like Moulānā Husain Ahmad Madanī *rahimahullāh* and Moulānā Shabbīr Ahmad Úthmānī *rahimahullāh* participated. The general public and I myself had the honour of participating. But after this incident, only a few days of Hadrat's *rahimahullāh* life remained.

Today also, the problems the Muslims are facing have the same two causes if one has to examine them

with insight:

1. discarding the Qur'ān and
2. mutual in-fighting.

If one ponders, this in-fighting is also caused by abandoning the Qur'ān. If we had practised even a little on the Qur'ān, our disputes would not have reached this stage.

The Limits of Differences of Opinion

Having differences of opinion is not a despised act if it remains within limits. Man's creator has placed the emotions of anger and defence in man's nature according to wisdom. This is essential for man's existence and progress. But He has kept this emotion for defence against enemies. If its direction changes, either due to erring in recognizing the enemy or specifying him, or due to some other reason, when the enemy changes his direction, he will become the cause of his own destruction. Consequently, the Qur'ān has specified the direction of the enemy for the believer,

ان الشيطان لكم عدو فاتخذوه عدوا

"Shaytān is your enemy. Always regard him as your enemy."

This means that the target of a believer's anger and attack should always be shayṯān and satanic forces. When the direction of his war is this way (towards shayṯān), it is called *jihad* in the terminology of the Qur'ān. This is the greatest form of worship. It is mentioned in a ẖadīth that *jihad* is the noblest task in Islam. However, if the direction of the war moves away from here, instead of *jihād*, it will now be *fasād* (corruption) to save which, all the Messengers ﷺ and divine books of Allâh ﷻ were sent. In its apparent form there seems to be no difference between *jihād* and *fasād*. The differentiating factor that makes it a *jihād* is if the focus of attack is Shaytân and the forces of Shaytân, otherwise it will be termed as *fasād*.

The two nation theory which created Pakistan is the practical detailed outline of this brief statement. The believers of Islam are one united nation and the non-believers are another nation. This should be the direction of their *jihad*.

Shāh Walīullāh *rahimahullāh* has mentioned one of the wisdoms of *jihad*. When the emotions of anger and defence which are naturally kept within man, find their natural exit through *jihad*, the mutual quarrels and in-fighting automatically disappear. The example of this is a roof which does not have gutters for the storm water to flow out. The water will gather on the roof, break it and go through.

Peace and War with Whom?

If we ponder today, this example applies to the whole Islamic world. The hatred of indecency, and immorality has exited the hearts due to satanic teachings, disbelief, apostasy and rebelling against Allāh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ. No one becomes angry due to these acts. The force of human toleration, conduct and manliness is spent in supporting disbelief, apostasy and oppression. The field of dislike, rebellion and enmity is pointed towards one's own limbs. Fights are caused due to trivial matters. If there is a dot of difference, it is increased and changed into a mountain. This has become the nutrition of the media. Such efforts are made from both sides as if *jihad* is being implemented. It is as if

two warring factions are having a battle. No person looks at himself to see that his own house is flowing away in the deluge.

From governmental politics till family life and dealings, all manifest this phenomenon. Those who read the verse, "All the believers are brothers" are physically contending with one another. Where the Qur'ān encouraged forgiving, overlooking and forbearing, there battles are taking place. Where it called one to perform *jihad*, that front is left desolate for the incursion of the enemies. Alas, only to Allāh ﷻ can we complain. Where there is a race for positions in assemblies, councils, municipal boards, governmental positions and employment, a competition in trade and business, a conflict in properties and lands which is purely a battle for one's own rights, and the leaving of which according to everyone is regarded as high morality and good conduct, there no one is prepared to move an inch.

Firstly, the number of people working for the sake of Dīn and religion is very small. Whatever number there is, is used up in subsidiary issues while losing sight of the principal fundamental teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The minutest of issues has

become a battleground. Even major sins like backbiting, falsehood, harming Muslims, slander and mocking are not even considered. Disputes and fights are occurring in the houses of Allāh ﷻ in the name of religion. The matter even reaches the police and the courts.

These religious people do not have so much hatred for those who mock Allāh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ, who drink wine and who partake of interest as they have for those who oppose their views.

No person ever looks at the positive or negative aspects to realize that this in no way can permit fighting among the Muslims whereby backbiting, slander and despising can be tolerated.

A Wrong Endeavour in Reforming

When the focus of our newly educated reformers goes towards the destructive results of these mutual differences, and they consider the cure, they only find the evils in these differences which occur in the name of religion. They only think of solving the problem by effacing these differences. At that time

they forget all the battles that are fought purely for personal motives for which another person's life, honour and wealth become permissible. Behind these battles, the entire country becomes embroiled in the flood of hatred but because they have given it the name of new culture and nobility, neither does it remain an illness for the nation nor is there a need to ponder about the cure. Only the *mullas* are disgraced in these differences and fights. People are only pondering about the cure for this whereas the differences that are occurring in the name of religion, are caused mainly, if one ponders, due to exceeding the limits. These are not personal rights which can be given preference. They are the differences in interpretation of the Qur'ān and Sunnah which cannot be terminated.

Some of our modern reformers have regarded the entire problem to be limited to these differences and have suggested the cure of removing these differences and establishing a new common school of thought. The whole nation should have the same school of thought so that the root of all differences is effaced.

However, this procedure is neither logically possible

in religious issues nor practically possible. Yes, if there are purely secular dealings in which the dispute regards personal rights, people can overlook their demands and an amicable agreement can be reached. Therefore, the cure for mutual differences is not to efface the differences in opinion and make everyone conform to one view.

Differences in Opinion and Quarrelling

It is not a hidden fact from the people of insight that there are many issues in secular and religious matters in which there can be a difference of opinion. Having a differing view is a natural intellectual requirement. There can only be agreement in two cases:

Either there are no people of insight among the gathering. One person says something and all the others agree with him. Or one deliberately goes against one's own opinion in order to please the next person. Otherwise, if there is intelligence and honesty, then it is essential to have a difference of opinion. This difference of opinion is never harmful in any condition and in fact, provides food for thought for the others. It is for this reason that

opposition parties are regarded as essential in the assemblies.

The differences in the explanation of the unspecified and brief texts of the Qur'ān and Hadīth have been termed a mercy. This began from the initial era of Islam – the era of the Sāhābah ﷺ, the Tābi'īn and thereafter the Mujtahid Imāms. The meaning of wiping off these differences which the Sahābah ﷺ had, cannot be any other but to regard one group of the Sahābah ﷺ as being misled. This is totally in conflict with the text of the Qur'ān and Hadīth. It is for this reason that Hafiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* said that it is impossible to completely wipe off the difference in opinion which the Sahābah ﷺ had in any issue.

The Modus Operandi of the Sahābah ﷺ and the Mujtahidīn *rahimahumullāh*

Together with this, it is essential to keep the history of the Sāhābah ﷺ, the Tābi'īn and the Mujtahidīn in front of us. There was not a single incident where their differences of opinion led to a fight or argument. In spite of having differences, they

performed salāh behind one another and kept all the brotherly contact among themselves. This was a great achievement on their part.

The dispute in political issues among the Sahābah ﷺ was a preordained issue based on the wisdom of Allāh ﷻ. They fought among themselves with swords but during the beginning of this dissent, when the oppressed khalīfah, Úthmān ﷺ was besieged by the rebels and the rebels made *imāmat*, Úthmān ﷺ told the Muslims to perform salāh behind them. He mentioned a general rule,

اذا هم احسنوا فاحسن معهم وان هم اساءوا فاجتنب اسائتهم

"If they do any good act, assist them in it, and when they commit any wrong act, refrain from it."

By rendering them this guidance, he played with his life and provided the correct explanation of the verse,

وتعاونوا علي البر والتقوي ولا تعاونوا علي الاثم والعدوان

"Assist one another in virtue and piety and do not assist one another in sin and enmity."

In this way he shut the door of mutual divisions and quarrels.

At the end of this dissent, when the battle raged between Àlī ﷺ and Mu'āwiyah ﷺ, the Roman government seized the opportunity and extended its hand of friendship and assistance to Mu'āwiyah ﷺ in order to win him over to their side. Mu'āwiyah's ﷺ reply was, "Do not be deceived by our differences. If you had to turn your direction towards the Muslims, I will be the first soldier in the army of Àlī ﷺ to combat you."

This indicates that the fundamental realities of Islam were not hidden from anyone's view although the differences had become so severe due to the treachery of the hypocrites.

In short, the differences which the Sahābah ﷺ, Tābi'īn and Mujtahidīn had among themselves in explaining the Qur'ān and Hadīth, was undoubtedly a mercy. No aspect of it was harmful for the Muslims, neither before nor can it be today. The condition is that it must remain within the limits which they confined themselves to. These differences had no effect on their salāh, jamā'ah, imāmat and

social life.

Disputes and Reformation

Other differences in the name of religion that occurred after the first era had the titles of sunnah, bid'ah etc. Many people discarded the correct principles in interpreting the Qur'ān and Sunnah and made their own opinions their leaders. They created new issues. This is undoubtedly that division which the Qur'ān and Sunnah warns the Muslims about.

An endeavour to terminate or decrease it was definitely beneficial. However, the Qur'ān has mentioned the method of curtailing it as well. These are the principles of inviting towards good from amongst which the first one is wisdom, tact, then rendering good advice sympathetically and calling the people gently towards the correct meaning of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Finally one has to debate in the best possible manner, that is, to present evidence in order to be clearly understood. Regrettably, the people of knowledge in general and the reformers have forsaken these principles. They are only engrossed in debate, and that too, without any

conditions. They mock their adversaries by using all kinds of tricks whether they are true or false, permissible or impermissible. The inevitable consequence of this is fighting, arguing and corruption.

The Temporary Cure

Today, when the division of the Muslims has reached its pinnacle, no person is prepared to listen to anything that goes against his own views. There is no such force that can make any group submit to one view. There is only one path to save Islam and the Muslims from mutual fights and the destructive effects of in-fighting and that is, the responsible members of every group should ponder whether the issues they are dabbling in and having differences about, are the fundamental issues of Islam for which the Qur'ān was revealed and for which Rasūlullāh ﷺ was sent. Did Rasūlullāh ﷺ sacrifice his life for them or are the fundamental issues of Islam something else. In this country[9], the Christians are seeing dreams of making it a Christian country by exerting

[9] This refers to Pakistan.

all their energies and using all their formidable means at their disposal. On the other hand, the masses are openly mocking the teachings of Allāh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ. Everything is being done in the name of Islam for which the Qur'ān and Islam came into this world to wipe out. The people are neglecting the important fundamentals and have become embroiled in research of these secondary issues. If Allāh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ have to make a demand from us as to what we did when all these attacks were taking place against Dīn, what will be our reply?

I am certain that if any group ponders beyond its present disputes, it will sorely regret its pre-occupations and it will change its direction. The mutual enmity will decrease as a result.

At this point, I am not telling anyone to change his views. I am merely requesting people to find the correct avenue to utilise their energies. The mutual differences should be limited to the lessons in the classroom, *fatwās* and research journals. Here also, the tone must be gentle according to the principles of propagation of the Qur'ān. Regard the despising of another as poison. Our public *jalsahs*, newspapers

and posters should be involved in promoting the unanimous *masāil* and the fundamentals of Islam instead of increasing the mutual differences. Our fight, which has become a transgression, can change into *jihad*. As a result, the attention of the public can be turned away from mutual squabbles towards the correct service of Dīn.

The Correct and Incorrect Methods

Many people see the differences of the Úlamā in *masāil* and ask where they should go to. Hidden in the depths of this statement is the fact that now they are not going to listen to anyone and will do as they please. This innocent question of theirs apparently seems to be correct. Yet if they ponder a little, they will find the answer in their dealings occurring around them.

A person fell ill. There was a difference of opinion among the doctors and physicians regarding his diagnosis. What should they do? Should they not find out about the qualifications of the doctors, or find out from the patients of these doctors or from other experienced people and then choose one doctor

for the treatment? Whatever he diagnoses and prescribes will then be accepted. But they don't go around denigrating the other doctors. Here no one says that because the doctors have a difference of opinion, leave all of them. Do whatever you feel according to your own opinion. Why don't they do the same with the differences of the Úlamā?

Take another example. You have to present a case in court. You consulted the learned lawyers. If there is a difference of opinion among them, no person says that the case should not be brought to court or do not listen to any lawyer. Do whatever you feel is right in your opinion. What happens is that every person tries to find out in different ways who the best and most reliable lawyer is. He then appoints him as his lawyer while at the same time, although having differences with them, does not regard other lawyers as his enemy. He does not criticize them nor fight with them.

Why is this natural and simple principle not applied at the time of the differences of the Úlamā. Remember another point at this juncture. In the matter of illness or a court case, if you appointed the wrong doctor or an unreliable advocate, the harm

will most certainly affect you. However, in the matter of the differences of the Úlamā, there is no danger of any harm. It is mentioned in a hadīth that if a person asked a learned man a question and he gave the wrong reply, the sin will not be upon the questioner. The person issuing the *fatwā* (verdict) will be responsible. The condition is that you found out from such a person whom you trusted, after investigating that he was a reliable learned man, just as you would for a doctor or lawyer. After spending your energy in finding out from an authentic learned man, you are not responsible for any errors thereafter. Allāh ﷻ will regard you as innocent. Even if he delivers the wrong verdict, there will be no harm or accusation against you. Yes, this should not happen that for a doctor you find out that he has an M.B.B.S degree and what kind of patients are treated more in his surgery, but for an *ālim*, you merely limited yourself to his turban, *kurtah* and beard and that he can speak in a *jalsah*. If you did this, then you are not absolved of your responsibility. If he erred in his ruling, you will also be held responsible for the error.

Two Fundamentals of Mutual Wrangling

There are two fundamentals with regard to the disputes that are prevalent today in the name of religion. Firstly, the Úlamā of every group and party are involved and secondly, the public that follow them.

If the Úlamā, in their research and criticism, refrain from despising and denigrating others, in accordance with the Qur'ānic principles of propagation, is there any problem with this? They should turn the direction of their endeavours towards the fundamental issues of Islam in which no group has any difference of opinion. The calamities that are befalling the Muslims are related to these issues. Similarly, the general masses should spend their efforts in finding an authentic *ālim* and follow his guidance. They should not dispute with other Úlamā. This mutual fighting and wrangling, which has made the Muslims useless, can be terminated in spite of having all the sects and their differences. There is merely the need to pay a little attention and change the course of action. How I wish this message of mine can reach the people who can do some work

in this field. Merely in the name of Allāh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ, they should stand up with this compassionate invitation. Many of the difficulties of the Ummah can be removed and our society can be rescued from the destructive cave it has landed itself in.

The Treatment for General Political Disputes

In religious matters, whatever direction a person has chosen, he regards it as the teachings of Allāh ﷻ and His Rasūl ﷺ even though in reality, it may be wrong. However, he believes it to be Dīn. Under these conditions, the effort must continuously be made to sympathetically convince him what the correct path is. However, as long as this view of his does not change, he cannot be invited to change his view and adopt another one in order to strike a deal of reconciliation. He can only be told to keep his differing opinion within limits and not forego the Qur'ānic principles of wisdom, advice and debating in the best manner.

Where the matter deals with personal rights and

desires, it is very easy. In order to avoid disputes, leave your rights for others. The one who does this, will be honoured in this world and the purpose which he has left, can be obtained through another way. He will receive great glad tidings in the hereafter for which the world and all its governments and wealth cannot be a replacement.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

أنا زعيم ببيت في ربض الجنة لمن ترك المراء وهو محق

"I take responsibility to give the person a house in the middle of jannah who has left disputing in spite of being right."

In conclusion, I repeat my earlier statement that the root of all our problems is because of abandoning the Qur'ān and disputing among ourselves. This mutual dispute is also because of not being aware of the Qur'ānic teachings or is as a result of negligence. Partisanship has made these realities concealed from our view.

Although there is a minority of pious people in the

world, but there is no lack of them. Regrettably there is a severe drought of such people who can take their heads out of their tiny circles, look outside and answer the call of Islam and the Qur'ān. May Allāh ﷻ grant us the ability to tread the path of Dīn.

اللهم وفقنا لم تحب وترضي من القول والفعل والعمل والنية وصلي الله تعالي علي خير خلقه وصفوة رسله محمد وآله وصحبه اجمعين



